

March 20112

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



Little Ruby with a
WWI blinded soldier
at St Dunstan's



From the Chairman.

Your message from Major General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE, RM.

Welcome to the very first edition of the Blind Veterans UK Review! It may be of interest to you to know that the very first 'St Dunstan's Revue' (not Review!) appeared in July 1915, just four months after the Blinded Soldiers' and Sailors' Hostel moved from 6 Bayswater Hill, London to St Dunstan's Lodge, a property in Regents Park. This brand new organisation, founded by Sir Arthur Pearson, had been formed on 29th January 1915 at a meeting which constituted a committee of five people, known as the Blinded Soldiers' and Sailors' Committee. It derived its funds from voluntary subscriptions and gifts, and from the National Institute for the Blind (now the RNIB), the Red Cross Society and the National Relief Fund.

Since then, and mainly in its early years, our organisation has changed shape and name several times and in part, or as a whole, has been known as:

- 1916 – The Blinded Soldiers and Sailors Care Committee
- 1918 – The Blinded Soldiers' Childrens' Fund
- 1920 – St Dunstan's Hostel for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors
- 1922 – The St Dunstan's Hostel & After-Care Organisation

In 1923 St Dunstan's is finally incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.

Further changes were introduced before, during and after WWII to accommodate the needs of existing and future beneficiaries, the most recent being in the year 2000 when care was extended to include 'ex-Service people who have become blind during their lives, either through injury or from other causes'. About 94% of our current members come into this category.

And now we have changed again, specifically to protect and enhance the quality of work that we do for current and future members and their families. What we've achieved since 1915 is remarkable, and over recent years this has been to some extent in spite of our name, not because of it. Now we need to work hard to use the new name and the new brand to our advantage, both in terms of finding new members and of finding new donors. I very much hope you will all embrace Blind Veterans UK with enthusiasm, for you are our most convincing Ambassadors.

On the cover: Little Ruby at St Dunstan's Lodge walking with a soldier blinded in WWI. The full story is on pages 24 and 25.



Review

March 2012 | No 1021

Contact: Catherine Goodier T 020 4616 8367 revieweditor@blindveterans.org.

Blind Veterans UK Calendar

March

Amateur Radio Club 2nd - 10th
 Writer's Forum 17th
 Bowling Club 18th - 31st

August

Race Week 12th - 18th
 Writer's Forum 18th
 Golf 18th - 19th
 Archery Week 24th - 31st

April

Widows Week 8th - 14th
 Ex PoW Reunion 13th - 15th
 Golf 14th - 15th
 Writer's Forum 21st
 Masonic Weekend 27th - 29th

September

Sports & Activities Week 1st - 7th
 Writer's Forum 15th - 16th
 Golf 15th - 16th
 History Week, Llandudno 16th - 22nd

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Blind Veterans UK Review is published monthly by Blind Veterans UK (Formerly St Dunstan's) Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. www.blindveterans.org.uk

A company limited by guarantee No. 189648, registered in England. Registered Charity No. 216227 (England & Wales) and SCO39411 (Scotland). ISSN 0036-2808. Unless otherwise stated all photographs are copyright of Blind Veterans UK. Printed by Newnorth.

Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information.

Ex-Pow Reunion

The Ex-PoW Reunion will take place at Brighton from 13th – 16th April. Any former Prisoners of War who wish to attend the two day Reunion should ensure they book their place as soon as possible. If you require nursing or residential care, please book through your Welfare Officer.

For those with non-nursing, or residential care requirements, please book with Claire Green at Brighton by telephone: 01273 391422 or email: claire.green@blindveterans.org.uk

Service for the Dedication of the Blind Veterans UK Standard

A Service will take place at 11.30am on 7th March 2012 in the Chapel at Ovingdean for the Dedication of the Blind Veterans UK Standard.

Standard Bearer Nigel Whiteley will present the Standard, which will be blessed by the Rev Peter Clarke. The Service will be attended by Captain Paul Quinn, who is the General Secretary of the Royal Navy Association. Twenty two Standard Bearers from other organisations will be present, including those from The Fleet Air Arm and the Military and RAF Police.

Thank you Ernie Phillips - You're a Star

We would like to make a very public and long overdue thank you to Ernie Phillips for his work with the Music Week at the Ovingdean Centre in 2011. Ernie we thank you for your continued dedication and hard work.

Thank you for the Gavels

The Reunions team would like to thank Philip Sparling of Leeds for the gavels he has made, which will be used at Blind Veterans UK Reunions.

Silverstone Driving Day on 7th March 2012

We are once again grateful to Graham Raphael of Motorsport Endeavour who has offered 10 members the chance to take part in a Troops Driving Day at Silverstone on Wednesday 7th March 2012.

As this is not a Blind Veterans UK activity you must make your own travel arrangements to get to the race track. Troops from Combat Stress, Headley Court and Band of Brothers will also take part. The day will begin at 10am when there will be a briefing from Silverstone personnel on circuit etiquette and rules. A selection of cars will then be available for track driving. Lunch will be followed by more driving opportunities and the day will close with high-speed passenger rides with professional drivers.

For those who may not have driven for some time and may not have the confidence to take the wheel, there will be BSM cars with instructors in order that you may re-familiarise yourself.

If you would like to take part please email Catherine Goodier at the Review at: ReviewEditor@blindveterans.org.uk - or telephone: 020 7616 8367. The first 10 names selected from the draw will go on the driving day.



Picture: The Silverstone cars.

A Petrolhead's Dream - A Tour of Prodrive in Banbury.

Graham Raphael of Motorsport Endeavour, and Jackie Irwin of Prodrive, have offered 16 members the opportunity to take part in an exclusive tour of Prodrive's motorsport facilities, in Banbury, Oxfordshire. The tour is for Saturday 17th, or Sunday 18th March 2012, from 11am until 2.30pm. If you would like to go, please email Catherine Goodier, or telephone her on: 020 7616 8367. As this is not a Blind Veterans UK event you must make your way to Prodrive, which is a five minute taxi journey from Banbury train station.

Prodrive's Jackie Irwin will take you into the workshops, where designs for the MINI John Cooper Works World Rally cars, and the Aston Martin Racing cars go from concept to reality. After lunch there will be a tour of the Heritage Centre to see the results of Prodrive's 27 years as a leader in motorsport.

Cars include:

A 2003 Ferrari 550 GTS Maranello – Le Mans winning car.

A 2004 BAR F1 car – driven by Jenson Button in 2006 and Prodrive's P2, its concept road car.

Climb Snowdon with the Llandudno Centre Team

Snowdonia is the largest National Park in Wales, and it also boasts Snowdon, the highest mountain in England and Wales, which stands a mighty 3,560 ft above sea level. On 15th May 2012, 10 members are invited to attempt to take part in the ascent of Snowdon with members of the Sports and Recreation team from the Llandudno Centre. If you would like to take part in this activity break please telephone Nikki Green, or Paula Sartain at the Llandudno Centre on telephone: 01492 868740 or 01492 868741. Be quick as the first 10 members to phone will be selected.

All abilities are welcome, whether you want the challenge of ascending Snowdon, or prefer a more leisurely walk. Qualified instructors and sighted guides will be on hand, and all you will need to bring is a good pair of walking boots. You need to arrive at the Llandudno Centre on Monday 14th May as the Snowdon ascent will take place on the 15th, with departure on Wednesday 16th. A small equipment list will be sent out to the lucky ten.

Parcels for the Troops Day

John Marcelle will hold his Parcels for the Troops Day at Tesco in Romford on Saturday 24th March from 9.30am until 3pm. During the event Tesco shoppers donate an average of £23,000 worth of stock to go into the parcels that are sent to Troops serving overseas.

John and team will be joined by Service Personnel serving in the Royal Marines, the Gurkha Regiment, the Rifles, the Queen's Royal Hussars and the Queen's Irish Hussars. There will also be a drummer from The Royal British Legion.

If you would like to support John and the Armed Forces, Tesco is at Roneo Corner, 300 Hornchurch Road, Romford, Essex, RM11 1PY.



Picture: John Marcelle with Royal Marines at a previous Parcels for Troops Day.

Message in a Bottle

The Lions Club Message in a Bottle scheme, is a simple idea designed to encourage people to keep their personal and medical details on a standard form and in a common location - the fridge. A sticker located on the outside of the fridge indicates to paramedics that a message in the bottle can be found in the fridge.

Barbara Sweeney, PA to Welfare Services, has 50 bottles should you require one. She can be contacted on: telephone 020 7616 7922, or email: barbara.sweeney@blindveterans.org.uk

You may also be able to obtain one from your local chemist, Doctors' surgery, your nearest Neighbourhood Watch group, Age Concern, Council Offices, or Housing Associations. The bottles are free of charge.

The RNIB Royal Albert Hall Box - Concerts in March and April

If you would like to listen to concerts from the comfort of the RNIB's Box at the Royal Albert Hall, please telephone Michael Barbour, of the RNIB Music Advisory Service, informing him of the concert you wish to attend. He will advise on availability and cost. His telephone number is: 020 7391 2063.

The Dubliners, Tuesday 13th March at 7.30pm

2012 is a major landmark year for The Dubliners. It marks the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the band in O'Donoghues Pub on Merrion Row in Dublin's fair city.

Classical Spectacular - Thursday 15th, Friday 16th and Sunday 18th March at 7.30pm

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra returns to play all the classics with thundering cannons and indoor fireworks.

The programme includes: Bizet - Flower Song Carmen; Mozart - Lacrimosa from Requiem; Rodrigo - Adagio from Concierto de Aranjuez played by guitar sensation Craig Ogden, plus Tchaikovsky - Sleeping Beauty Waltz; Mascagni - Easter Hymn from Cavalleria Rusticana; Wagner - Prelude to Lohengrin Act I II;

Suppe - Light Cavalry Overture; Handel - Zadok the Priest; Verdi - Questa o quella; Sousa - Stars and Stripes Forever; Verdi - Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves; Hornpipe; Nessun Dorma; Rule Britannia! Land of Hope and Glory and the 1812 Overture.

Mountbatten Festival of Music Wednesday 12th and Thursday 13th April at 7.30pm

The Mountbatten Festival of Music features the Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines performing a wide variety of music, encompassing traditional military marches and fanfares, a classical overture and music from stage and screen.



**the leading charity
for seafarers in need**

Each year funding from Seafarers UK enables life-changing support to be provided to tens of thousands of seafarers and their families experiencing real difficulty. To make this possible Seafarers UK gives £2.5 million in grants annually to more than 70 maritime charities providing frontline welfare services.

Blind Veterans UK is incredibly proud that its work with blind and visually impaired former serving seafarers will be supported by Seafarers UK in 2012.

To find out more about the work of Seafarers UK please see their website www.seafarers-uk.org

Letters to the Editor

As we welcome your letters please do send them in to us. They could be in response to an article in the Review, or something you feel to be of interest to your fellow members. You can send letters by post to Blind Veterans UK Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Please mark them Letter to the Editor. Or if you prefer please send an email to the Review at email: revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk

Dear Editor

I would like to add my congratulations to our President Ray Hazan on receiving his O.B.E., which in my opinion is long overdue. It is nice to see the honours go to the right people for a change, instead of a sportsman, or actor.

I am really chuffed that they have decided to honour Ray as he well deserves the credit.

I hope he will still speak to me now that he has been honoured!

Well done Ray.

Best regards

Roger Williams



Picture: Blind Veterans UK President Ray Hazan OBE.

Dear Review Editor

I hope that we haven't lost the name of St Dunstan's Review just yet. We 'oldies' still refer to pounds for weight, pints for liquids and feet and inches. I would therefore suggest that references to St Dunstan's will go on until the last present St Dunstaners have taken their last leave.

I read with great pleasure, that Ray Hazan has been awarded the O.B.E. I think that it's long overdue. Congratulations Ray.

Finally, can you say whether Ovingdean will still be called 'St Dunstan's'? I do hope so.

Yours faithfully

Ernie Bignell

Dear Mr Bignell

Thank you for your letter to the Review.

In answer to your request for clarification on the name of the centre at Ovingdean; when St Dunstan's became Blind Veterans UK on 21st February 2012, our Centres in Brighton, Sheffield and Llandudno also took on the name Blind Veterans UK.

They are now referred to as Blind Veterans UK centres. Though reference will be made to our heritage and St Dunstan's on most publicity material for the foreseeable future.

We all join with you in congratulating Ray Hazan on his richly deserved OBE.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Jones

Director of Fundraising and Communications

The Only Constant is Change, by Robert Leader

When I was appointed Chief Executive of St Dunstan's eleven years ago, I found a wealthy organisation with a small number of beneficiaries. Fortunately the Trustees had recognised that, without a change of constitution, beneficiary numbers would decline to a level below which there could be no viable St Dunstan's. Many St Dunstaners didn't welcome the change but without it St Dunstan's would not have survived and thrived.

Much of my background has been about change, firstly with The Leonard Cheshire Foundation where I relocated a residential home from a totally outdated and unsuitable historic mansion, sitting in its own beautiful but isolated parkland to a centre of population. Many of the residents and supporters initially didn't welcome that change, but without it the Cheshire Home would not have survived.

This was followed by my time in the NHS where change was constant, as successive Governments pulled up the plant to see if it was still growing! These changes were also frequently regarded as unnecessary and unwelcome.

My next role was as Head of the Health Service for British Forces Germany, where I was implementing significant change involving, amongst other things, the final closure of the British Military Hospitals and the transition to German civilian hospitals. This was again not universally popular but was clinically essential.

You will have realised that the point I'm making is that none of us likes change, any more than the dinosaur or the dodo, but without it we also will not survive.

St Dunstan's has seen a lot of change since 1915 and one of the most exciting changes took place on 21st February this year, when we became Blind Veterans UK.

I truly believe that many organisations get dragged down by their history.

Heritage is really important and we should never forget whence we came, but we need always to look to the future and make the changes, as we approach our centenary, which will ensure the survival of this wonderful Organisation for future generations.

Blind Veterans UK immediately tells people what we do and I am confident that our new vision, our new mission and our new values will enable us to attract more members and donors so that we can continue to make that 'very real difference' to people's lives for the next hundred years.



Picture: The Blind Veterans UK Logo

The Estates Team by Tom Williams, Housing Manager.

Blind Veterans UK employs five surveyors, ably supported by their assistants, who are based in offices across the UK in Woodingdean, Watford, Cwmbran, Market Bosworth & Selby. The surveyors' main responsibility is managing Blind Veterans UK owned property occupied by our members.

The surveyors also help members with property related issues. During the last year they made over 200 visits to members in their own homes and were able to assist with a wide range of matters. They often advise on works that are required to enable safe and comfortable independent living. This is an area where Blind Veterans UK may be able to assist financially, either directly, or in partnership with other organisations.

Examples of works we have carried out are:

The installation of stairlifts - The creation of wet rooms for level access showering - Door and hallway widening to enable wheelchair access - The relaying of garden paths - Hand rail installation - Ramps and other access improvements - Door entry systems - General repairs and maintenance.

If you have any property related issues you would like to discuss, please contact your Welfare Officer, who will be able to refer you to the appropriate surveyor.

I'm based at Harcourt Street in London, with four other members of the Estates team. The team includes Mick Byrne, Project Manager; who is responsible for major projects, which have included the regeneration of the former North Wales Medical Centre, now the Llandudno Centre. I am the Housing Manager and have responsibility for co-ordinating lettings, collecting rent and generally looking after the 330 tenancies. I work closely with Anne Ajewole, Senior Estates Administrator and Engy Akinsola, Systems Coordinator.

The team is headed by David Arthur who joined Blind Veterans UK, then St Dunstan's in 2009. Like all of us, David really enjoys meeting members in their homes and seeing firsthand the impact of the work we do.

One project the Estates team worked on recently was to provide a workshop for John Hutchinson of Largs in Scotland, where he could carry out his picture framing and soapstone carving. A highly motivated man, John had been for training at Brighton and he was eager to get started on his new hobby. We worked together to balance his need to begin as soon as possible, with our desire to provide a building, which would be large enough and provide a comfortable working environment, and good value for money.

When we first came on the scene he had been given two quotes for what were little more than garden sheds – lightweight, poor quality, but cheap and readily available. To find a solution we had a number of discussions with the Art & Craft team at Brighton, who prepared a standard workshop specification for us to follow. This confirmed the size of building required, the size and shape of the workbench, and information on the provision of heat, light and insulation. We then found a company based quite close to John that sold log cabins in various pre-determined sizes and shapes. However they were prepared to make adjustments to their designs to accommodate our specific requirements, at very little extra cost. They were also happy, again for extra cost, to build the workbench on site. An order was then placed for a low maintenance log cabin workshop, which was delivered to John's property and erected on site, with power and heating installed.



Picture: John Hutchinson relaxes outside his workshop with Guide Dog Cora.

Here John Hutchinson writes about the workshop: When I realised that my eyesight was going, very rapidly and for no immediately apparent reason, I felt more than worried. I had so much going for me at the time, my wife Charlotte and I were involved in quite a range of charity work in Africa. The involvement meant a great deal of organising and visiting the projects to check that everything was going well. I also had several fundraising hobbies to help the projects sustain themselves, buying and selling old motorbikes was one. We also had contacts in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea who were hoping we would return at some date, to do some essential field work.

So, in short, life was very busy. This all came to a rather abrupt halt, when, just a few weeks after our return from Africa, my vision went from 20/20, to something like 4/60. Three weeks was all it took, and from riding motor bikes I was feeling my way with a long cane. It was a very traumatic experience, but help was at hand, thank God, in the form of my wife Charlotte, who was and is absolutely marvellous and Blind Veterans UK. As an ex-Serviceman with 18 years Army life, nearly all in the Parachute Squadrons of RE and Signals, and finally 144 Para Medic Squadron, it meant I was eligible to become a member of this great Organisation. I threw myself into learning new skills through the courses that are available to us.

At Brighton I followed the well structured and organised courses in the Art & Craft Workshop, and learnt how to make picture frames and rocking horses. I would like to thank the instructors, in particular Adrian, my personal and very patient tutor. The cream on the cake came when I was offered the chance to enjoy the most wonderful of workshops, in which to practice and develop the skills I had learned. What a transformation that has been. I am now working on a project to design and make aids for VI archers. I would like to thank those who organised the workshop, including John Gascoigne, the Estates Surveyor.

The result has been a very happy and fulfilling two years of planning, making and crafting items that can be given as presents, used as ornaments, or just looked at and admired (I hope!). The workshop replaces the hours previously spent on motorbikes and cycle repairs.

I am currently setting up one corner as a radio shack, once I get my amateur radio foundation licence. So beware, ham radio guys – the airways will soon be humming from my workshop, on the banks of the Clyde estuary!

Anchored in Time, by Jack Netherstreet.

It has been decades in the making, but member Jack Netherstreet's book, *Anchored in Time*, is now available in hardback. In the book, Jack, who served as a medic with the Royal Navy, gives a firsthand account of a young man's ventures into the world at large as a result of the outbreak of World War II. From the commencement of hostilities he was determined to join the sick berth branch of the Royal Navy. A choice which may well have been influenced by the fact his father was a medic in the First World War.

Jack was based at Portsmouth on the Victory and then served at Haslar Hospital, Gosport, working as a sick berth attendant caring for those suffering from injuries caused by war and illness. A posting overseas followed and he was dispatched to serve aboard a landing craft based in the Indian Ocean, experiencing the conflict in the South East Asia theatre of war.

Written with great humour the book is the product of his sons asking him to give people the opportunity to read his account of those extraordinary times, and to pay tribute to his comrades. It was a family affair, as Jack's wife Pam, their son Dave and his wife Marian have all been involved.

Anchored in Time is available by sending a cheque for £16.99, made payable to, Mary Ann Press at 16 Albany Close, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2EY.



Picture: The author at home with left his wife Pam and right their son Dave.

The Courage of St Dunstaners, by General Sir Peter de la Billière KCB, KBE, DSO, MC, DL

Sir Winston Churchill once remarked 'Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities because it is the quality that guarantees all others.'

These apposite words epitomise St Dunstaners. It was in 1993 that my son Edward and his close friend Dominic Marshall planned to use their summer break from Law college to climb Mount McKinley, the highest mountain in North America. Dominic's father the Rev Peter Marshall, who at that time was on the staff of St Dunstan's suggested they take with them Alan Perrin, known as Reggie, who had been an outstanding Arctic Warfare instructor with the Royal Marines, until he was almost lethally wounded in a grenade accident. Despite his wounds and the blindness he suffered, with true St Dunstan's spirit Reggie was game to give it a go.

I heard of Reggie's planned assault on the mountain in 1994 and I was amazed and impressed beyond words. Ever since that experience I have had a special admiration for St Dunstaners and their enduring courage. Since then it has been my privilege to march with St Dunstan's at the Cenotaph Parade and you have been courteous enough to let me do so.

St Dunstan's is undergoing a period of significant change. Your Trustees have taken vital decisions that are essential if this great Organisation is to survive. To name a few they extended the qualification for membership to include blind ex Servicemen and women, in addition to those special people blinded on active duty. They have launched massive fundraising operations to ensure the expansion so necessary for the survival of St Dunstan's and have opened a new training centre in Llandudno, enabling wider access for members across the country. In doing this they have incurred ever increasing costs running into tens of millions of pounds, much of which has been already promised as I write. But there remains an on going need for maintenance and improvements, which require a perpetual need of funding if your great institution is to continue. I travel widely within the United Kingdom and meet young and old across

the Nation and whenever appropriate I enquire whether my audience knows of St Dunstan's and the dedicated work it does. With sadness and no little amazement I receive a negative response in a majority of cases, particularly amongst the younger generations. Such widespread ignorance is an impairment on the ability of St Dunstan's to raise the funding necessary to secure its future.

St Dunstan's must meet this challenge, and an important part of its presentation to the world at large is to change the name to one more directly indentified with the work it is committed to. Blind Veterans UK will achieve this even though for me, and I am sure for many of you, I shall never cast the founding and historical name of St Dunstan's from my memories.

Change is of the essence for survival in any prospering organisation and critical to progress, but implementing it is frequently painful. Change requires courage of which there is no shortage in St Dunstan's.

The great privilege that you do me in inviting me to march with you at the Cenotaph Parade for the past seventeen years has led me to appreciate I march with some of the most courageous veterans in our society. For me it is a privilege, which creates a sense of humility and pride and it is the people that count more than the name.

Thank you St Dunstaners, now Blind Veterans UK members, for having me along.



Picture: General Sir Peter de la Billière right, at the Cenotaph Parade 2011 with from left: Corporal Bill Drinkwater, President Ray Hazan OBE, Terry Walker and Lance Bombadier Rob Long.

I won a raffle and ended up with a 500lb UXB, by Irving Nuttall.

When Irving Nuttall bought a raffle ticket he found himself at the centre of something quite unexpected. Here 55 years later, Irving, from Rawdon in Leeds, writes of his experience.

My adventure happened in 1957, when I was serving as a Craftsman in the REME, stationed at a camp in Tripoli, North Africa. We had been in the desert area for over a year without any rest, or leave and the lads were beginning to moan. Our C.O. came up with an idea to shut the men up. There would be a raffle and the three soldiers whose tickets were selected from the draw would win a week's leave. It was at a tented camp on the beach at Piccolo Capri, just on the outskirts of Tripoli, and it comprised an 'other ranks' beach, and an Officers' Beach, which had far superior accommodation.

My ticket was picked from the raffle and I was one of the three winners for the weeks leave. The two other winners were lads from the 6th Regiment Royal Tank Regiment. They were only 18 years old and classed me as an old man. I was only 22, a mere four years older than them, but they thought I was ancient. As they felt the age difference so acutely, and we were from different regiments, they asked if I would mind if they left me on my own for the week. I told them it wasn't a problem.

As the camp was on the beach I hired a snorkel breathing tube, goggles and flippers, as I planned to spend my week swimming and exploring the area just off the beach. There was also the fact I didn't have any money and couldn't afford to do anything else. Several days after my arrival I was swimming about 40 to 50 yards from the beach when I saw what I thought was part of a Roman ruin 15 feet below me. It made sense as the Roman's built a lot in the area.

I decided to dive down and take a look. On closer inspection the object was about 5 foot in length, and 2 foot in diameter, but it tapered to a point at the large diameter end. It was then the penny dropped. As Tripoli had not escaped unscathed during WWII, I wondered if it was a bomb. By now, out of breath, I was forced to surface. From the sea above the bomb I took two bearings so that I could find it again.

As I was close to the Officers' beach I swam to it to find an Officer, as I desperately wanted a second opinion. I found one who was carrying flippers and asked if he was an Officer and the name of the Regiment he served in. He seemed rather surly and reluctant to answer and I asked him again. It was then he said he was an Officer and asked why I wanted to know. I told him I thought I had found a bomb and asked if he would swim out with me to check. He seemed reluctant, but he put his flippers on and we swam to the bomb.

Using the bearings I had taken earlier I stopped above the bomb and shouted to the Officer to follow me down. We dived to it and I sat to the side of the bomb, trying not to float up. I turned to gesture to him, but he had gone, I looked up to the surface of the water and saw what I thought was a fast motorboat moving away from me. I then realised it was him swimming in absolute terror. I surfaced and swam to the Officers beach to see what was wrong with him.

He started to rant and rave, asking if I was mad. He screamed 'That was a 500lb unexploded German bomb'. I replied: 'So what it's been there for almost 15 years, why should it decide to go off now?' I then walked away from him. I went back to my spot on the 'other ranks' beach and watched as he cleared the Officers from their beach. There was no need to clear our beach, as we were a safe distance from the bomb, should it explode. I remember thinking that he may have a problem in the morning. I told the two Royal Tank Regiment lads, the ones who thought I was ancient, what I had found and this was to help me a couple of weeks later.

The following morning I went to my usual place on the beach and was told by a Sergeant that swimming was no longer permitted. I sat on the beach and watched a rowing boat, which had come from the direction of the Officers beach head out into the sea. It was full of men dressed in black. Pretending not to know about the bomb, I asked the Sergeant what was going on. I learned it was the Libyan Bomb Disposal team, who were searching for the bomb. I watched for a couple of hours and noticed they were searching in the wrong place. What I predicted then began to happen.

An Officer moved away from the Libyans and swam to my beach. It was the Officer who had panicked. He saw me on the beach and asked if I could find the bomb again. I told him I could.

Although I also thought, rather than panic he should have taken bearings and placed a marker above the bomb. Using the bearings I had taken the day before I guided him to the bomb. Reaching the spot we dived down only to discover it had gone. All we found was a trough where it had laid. The sea had been particularly rough during the night and the currents had washed the bomb away. We didn't find it again and to this day I don't know what happened to it.

Earlier I mentioned that I told the lads from the Royal Tank Regiment about finding the bomb. When we returned to camp they told everyone about my bomb. As a result I gained a lot of respect from the Officers and men, and it made me feel in some way like a hero.

When my time came to leave North Africa and return to England for demobilisation, Major Barker, the C.O. called me into his office, and tried his best to encourage me to remain in the Army for a further three years. My eyesight had already started to fail and it was with great reluctance that I had to refuse. I think the desert sun had accelerated my loss of vision, as from then on I started the descent into blindness.



Picture: Irving Nuttall (left) in the North African Desert near Tripoli during his Service with the REME by an American International Half Track from WWII.

The Gun Club, by Roger McMullan.

It has been another successful year for the Gun Club, Brighton. We welcomed new members and they are all doing well. Once again the men were entered in the Winter and Summer Postal Leagues of the National Small Bore Rifle Association and all did very well in their prospective divisions.

On Wednesday 11th January 2012, a presentation was held in the Sports Hall; when the medals and trophies were presented by Terry Watts, who is the son of John, a volunteer for the Gun Club.

The Summer League medals were as follows:

Division 3	Bill Godden	991 score	Gold Medal
Division 4	Brian Taylor	961 score	Bronze Medal
Division 5	John Watts	957 score	Gold Medal
	David Weltman	956 score	Silver Medal
Division 7	Arthur Walton	930 score	Silver Medal
Division 8	Clifford Ford	932 score	Gold Medal
Division 9	George Oliver	852 score	Silver Medal

The Dorothy Wright Trophy was shot for in November 2011. All shooters had to nominate a score, and place it in a sealed envelope, then shoot five shots at two cards to get the aggregate out of 100. The envelopes were then opened and the person who shot nearest to their nominated score was the winner.

The 2011 winner was John Watts, who nominated 92 and scored 92.

The Cliff Ford Shield for the total scores over the Winter and Summer periods was won by Bill Godden, with a total score of 1955. Second place went to Brian Taylor, with a total score of 1911, and third place to Dave Weltman, with a total score 1901.

We aim to continue the good work in 2012.

Farewell Little Ruby

The front page of St Dunstan's first annual report in 1916 featured a striking photograph of a handsome, young, blinded soldier being led by the hand by a small girl. The photograph became a powerful symbol for St Dunstan's, as it was used on emblems and sold on flag days. It wasn't a fundraising invention, the small girl really existed and she was in the habit of leading the war blinded men of St Dunstan's around the grounds in Regent's Park.

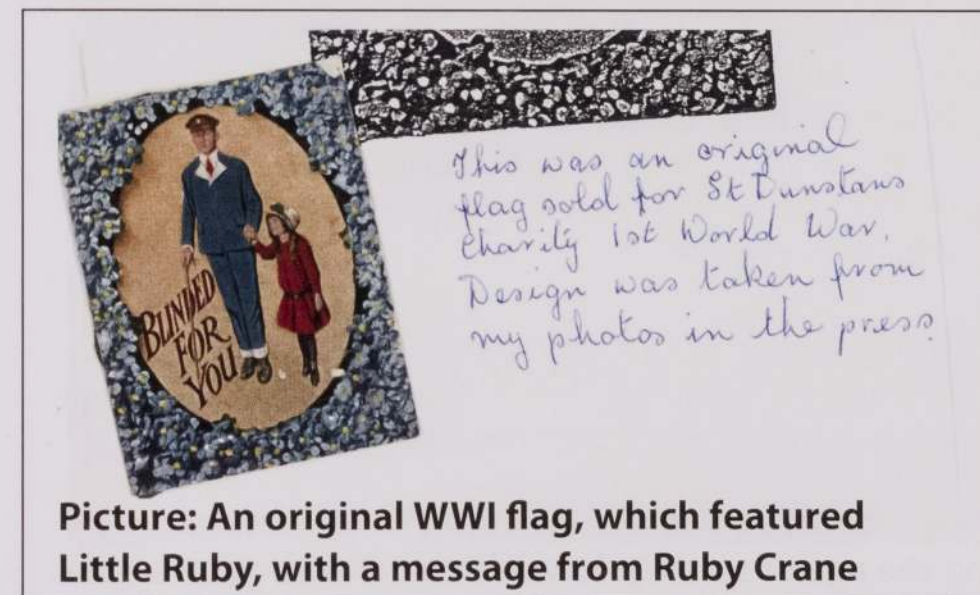
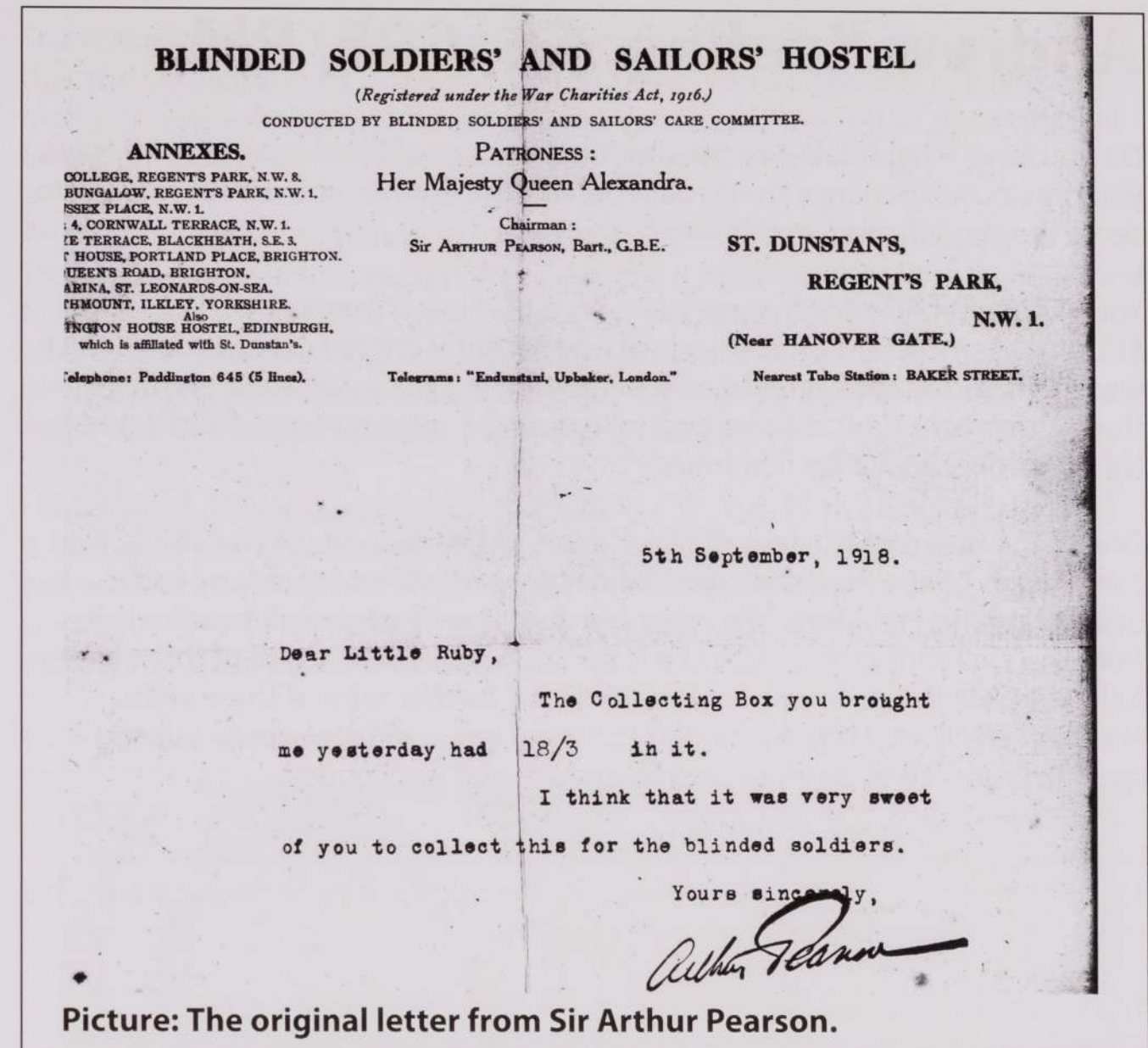
It is the photograph we have used on the front page of this edition of the Review. The small girl's name was Ruby Smith, the daughter of William Smith, the Head Gardener of the estate, who was still employed by Otto Kahn to look after the grounds while St Dunstan's was in occupation. Ruby died on Christmas Day 2011, and drawing from a past Review article by David Castleton, and information from Ruby's niece, Julia Hunt, we are proud to bring you an insight into her early life.

Little Ruby, as she became known, had the run of the grounds and soon she was befriending the nurses and men. From the age of three until she was nine she grew up as the only child among a community of young blinded men and their sighted instructors and helpers. Her sisters Margaret, Julia's mother, and Rene were older than Ruby and had to help in their parents' house.

Many years later, as Mrs Ruby Crane, a widow in retirement, she met with David Castleton, a former Editor of the Review, and recalled some of her childhood memories and the coming and expansion of St Dunstan's Hostel. "I remembered the horses and carts bringing in stuff. When they were putting up wooden buildings they padded the posts and supports with straw and wound red felt around them. There were handrails everywhere to everything. Although the buildings were all over the lawns my father realised it was all in a good cause."

Young as she was, Ruby understood that the young men who now filled her world could not see. 'I would go up to them and chat and we'd walk around just holding hands. If they wanted to go to a certain workshop I knew them all by heart. I always remembered how my little hand seemed so small in theirs.' Ruby made a weekly visit to Arthur Pearson, taking roses from her father. In her diary she wrote that it was the highlight of her week.

Among her cherished mementos of those days is a letter from Arthur Pearson in 1918 to his by then six year old supporter, which we have set out below.



We are grateful to Julia Hunt for loaning us the letter from Sir Arthur Pearson, and the WWI flag, which sold to raise money for the men who were blinded during WWI.

Member Trustees – Major General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE, RM.

Do you have what it takes to be a member Trustee of Blind Veterans UK? Have you previous experience that would benefit the Council and would you like to serve the Organisation in this way?

You will probably know that we have, for a number of years now, had several St Dunstaner Trustees on the Council. The recently revised constitution, which was approved at the Annual General Meeting in December 2011, provides for three Trustees in this category and following our rebranding as Blind Veterans UK this provision will be continued.

One of the member Trustees of Blind Veterans UK, formerly St Dunstan's, will continue to be the President, who holds office ex-officio for as long as he, or she, remains President. The other two member Trustees will be selected from the wider membership and will be appointed for a period of three years, following which they may be appointed for a further term of three years. No Trustee will hold office for more than two terms of three years unless specifically asked to do so by an 80% majority of the Council.

Following the retirement of Jamie Weller in December, one of the member Trustee appointments is currently vacant. The other will become vacant on the retirement of Dave Stuttard in December 2012.

The Council has established a Nominations Sub-Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Vice Chairman, which also comprises the Chairman, the President Ray Hazan and one other Trustee. This committee considers the suitability of all applications or nominations for people wishing to become Trustees and will put its recommendations forward to the Council for ratification. When St Dunstaner Trustees were first appointed, prior to the change of Constitution in 2000, there was a pool of approximately 400 war blinded St Dunstaners who were eligible.

We now have well over 3000 members of Blind Veterans UK who are eligible and I am hoping that members will wish to either put themselves forward, or nominate others who they feel would make good Trustees.

Whilst there is no fixed retirement age for Trustees, they have generally stood down on reaching the age of seventy. It would therefore be preferable

if candidates are able to offer at least one three year term of service before reaching this age.

The role of member Trustee is very important to the Council, as it ensures that the Council is kept in touch with the views, wishes and feelings of the members and other beneficiaries of Blind Veterans UK, and that decisions will always be made with the best interests of beneficiaries in mind.

Any member wishing to nominate either themselves, or someone else as a Trustee should first ensure that they have the consent of the person concerned to do so, and should then write to, or email, Robert Leader the Chief Executive, who acts as Secretary to the Nominations Sub-committee, with a brief description of any relevant experience and saying why they think they would make a good member Trustee of Blind Veterans UK.

I know from my own experience, that being a Trustee of this Organisation is both interesting and enjoyable and I do hope that a number of members will want to contribute to the continuing development of the work that was started in 1915 by Sir Arthur Pearson and is now continuing to help more and more blind and visually impaired ex-Service men and women.

With best wishes to you all.



“I lost my sight overnight and thought my life was over. But now I’m doing things I never did before. I love life. I love it.”

Wendy Kane, Royal Army Medical Corps

No one who's served our country should battle blindness alone. That's why we're here to help with a lifetime's practical and emotional support, regardless of when they served and how they lost their sight.

Join or support us at www.blindveterans.org.uk or call 0300 111 2233

St Dunstan's since 1915

Blind Veterans UK

Picture: Blind Veterans UK material.



“I’ve been completely blind for years. But I’ve been taught to use a computer, so now I can keep in touch with my son. It’s changed my life.”

Harry Beevers, Royal Army Education Corps

No one who’s served our country should battle blindness alone. That’s why we’re here to help with a lifetime’s practical and emotional support, regardless of when they served and how they lost their sight.

Join or support us at
www.blindveterans.org.uk
 or call 0300 111 2233

St Dunstan’s since 1915



Picture: Blind Veterans UK material.

I became a member in 2001 and I’ve been able to go back to activities I had to give up. I loved cycling and it was great to discover the tandems at Brighton. Whenever I went down for training I’d go cycling for a couple of hours with an instructor. For safety sake I rode on the back! I’ve also done the London to Brighton run four times, and fulfilled a lifetime’s ambition to do a parachute jump. I’ve always loved quizzes and am a quiz master; thanks to the computer skills I can research questions online. And I write a quiz for the Review each month.

Ten questions on...

The subject “Comedians”.

by Harry Beevers

1. Which comedian who topped the UK pop music charts in September 1965 was born in Knotty Ash in 1927?
2. Which British comedian’s films were the only western films to escape censorship during the Communist era in Albania?
3. The Cuckoo Song was the signature tune of which comedy duo, one English and the other American?
4. Which comedy team of brothers made their Broadway debut in 1924 in the musical “I’ll Say She Is”?
5. Which comedian who died in 1968 was a former member of the so-called Crazy Gang? His real name was Robert Winthrop and he took as his stage name that of his Sergeant in World War I.
6. Which comedian who was born in Wigan in 1904 received both the O.B.E. and the Order of Lenin and was said to be Joseph Stalin’s favourite film star?
7. The late Eric Morecambe was a Director of which former Football League club currently playing in the Conference National League?
8. Which comedian, born in Aden, completed 43 marathons in 51 days in 2009 for Sport Relief, despite having no prior history of long distance running?
9. In 2005 the annual British Comedy Awards renamed its writer of the year award in honour of which late Bedfordshire born comedian who died in October of that year aged 76?
10. Name the four original Goons.

Answers on page 30

Colin Williamson's Beer of the Month

Sierra Nevada 'Torpedo' India Pale Ale.

Sierra Nevada 'Torpedo' India Pale Ale is brewed in Chico, California, and is a big, flavoursome IPA. Lots of hops go into the brew to make this a very 'bitter' style of beer, but this is balanced out by the malt that is evident in the background. It pours a nice reddish golden colour with a soapy head that lingers to the finish. The citrus flavours, hints of orange and grapefruit, are accompanied by distinctive pine notes. These help to make this beer a firm favourite with bitter drinkers throughout the UK and America. The Torpedo in the name refers to the vessel which the fermented beer runs in to lie on hops in order to give it more bitterness and aroma. Quite strong, it weighs in at 7.2%, it isn't a session beer but one definitely worth the effort in tracking down. It is available in large stores throughout the UK, and some smaller independent outlets.

Answers to Ten questions on...

The subject "Comedians". from page 29

1. Ken Dodd, he topped the charts with his song Tears.
2. Norman Wisdom.
3. Laurel and Hardy, Stan and Oliver.
4. The Marx Brothers.
5. Bud Flanagan.
6. George Formby. He was said to be the only man ever to win both the Aintree Grand National and the T.T. Races which of course he did in two of his films.
7. Luton Town
8. Eddie Izzard.
9. Ronnie Barker.
10. Harry Secombe, Michael Bentine, Peter Sellars and Spike Milligan.

Family News

Congratulations to:

Birthdays:

Albert Dickinson of Leeds, West Yorkshire, who celebrated his 100th birthday on 23rd February.

John O'Carroll of Hove, East Sussex, who celebrated his 100th birthday on 9th February.

Anniversaries:

Ronald and Ellen Williams of Buckingham who celebrated 72 years of marriage on 19th February.

Charles and Peggy Blockley who celebrated 71 years of marriage on 19th February.

Platinum (70th):

George and Pearl Bell of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 15th February.

Blue Sapphire (65th):

Leonard and Joy Dunn of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 8th February.

John and Betty Foebuck of Ormskirk, Lancashire on 15th February.

Bert and Helen Bleach of Petersfield, Hampshire on 15th February.

Diamond (60th):

Fred and Barbara Tooley of Wirral, Merseyside on 9th February.

Raymond and Jean Warner of Mitcham, Surrey on 17th February.

Michael and Judy Margetts of Peterborough on 23rd February.

Golden (50th):

George and Barbara Connolly of Prescot, Merseyside on 9th February.

We regret to announce the death of:

Bridget Addison who died on 25th October 2011, she was the wife of the Rev Philip Addison.

Suzanne Astell who died on 14th January 2012, she was the wife of Cyril Astell.

Eileen Clarke who died on 5th November 2011, she was the wife of William Clarke.

Mary Clarke who died on 1st December 2011, she was the wife of Gordon Clarke.

Maisie Corker who died on 2nd January 2012, she was the wife of George Corker.

Ruby Draper who died on 1st August 2011, she was the wife of Raymond Draper.

Anne Goulding who died on 6th January 2012, she was the widow of Kenneth Goulding.

May Gregory who died on 15th November 2011, she was the wife of Joseph Gregory.

Doris Hamilton who died on 8th January 2012, she was the widow of Hugh Hamilton.

Elsie Hewson who died on 26th January 2012, she was the widow of Frederick Hewson.

Sylvia Jackson who died on 22nd January 2012, she was the wife of Derek Jackson.

Maureen Lane who died on 27th December 2011, she was the widow of the late Harold Lane.

Margaret Leigh who died in November 2011, she was the wife of Kenneth Leigh.

Monica Mason who died on 19th January 2012, she was the widow of the late Jack Mason.

Mavis Spencer who died on 1st November 2011, she was the wife of Kenneth Spencer.

Doreen Matkin who died on 9th January 2012, she was the wife of Lewis Matkin.

Olive Robinson who died on 4th February 2012, she was the widow of the late John Robinson.

Ilse Turley who died on 8th January 2012, she was the wife of Geoffrey Turley.

Pat Walshe who died on 1st December 2011, she was the wife of John Walshe.

Eva Warrington who died on 13th October 2011, she was the wife of Alan Warrington.

Ian Weeden who died on 10th January 2012, he was the husband of Alma Weeden.

Eiddwen 'Gwen' Woods who died on 3rd January 2012, she was the widow of the late James Woods.

Gwenneth Young who died on 30th June 2011, she was an overseas affiliate in Australia, the widow of the late Roger Young.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK

Alan Ashton of Lytham St Annes, Lancashire served in the Parachute Regiment from 1990 – 2003.

Reginald Ayers of Poulton Le Fylde, Lancs served in the General Service Corps, the Suffolk Regiment and the Parachute Regiment from 1948 to 1949.

Nancy Bowstead of Sidmouth, Devon served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1948.

Philomena Carikas of Houghton Le Spring, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Alfred Chisnall of St Helens, Merseyside served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1946 to 1948.

Thomas Clough of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Artillery from 1945 to 1977.

Albert Cole of Clevedon, Avon served in the Royal Military Police from 1950 to 1952.

Patricia Coleman from York served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1943.

Thomas Coote of Orpington, Kent served in the General Service Corps, the King's Regiment, the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), the Manchester Regiment, the South Staffordshire Regiment and the Royal Engineers from 1944 to 1954.

Leslie Dean of Reading, Berkshire served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1956.

Albert Denham of Blackburn, Lancashire served in the General Service Corps

and the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1946 to 1949.

Albert Dodd of Hornchurch, Essex served in the Essex Regiment from 1945 to 1947.

Ian Downs of Brighton served in the Royal Air Force from 1957 to 1960.

Edwin Dracup of Newcastle, Staffordshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1953.

Robert Dunn of Bewdley, Worcestershire served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve from 1941 to 1946.

Thomas Durbridge of Darlington, County Durham served in the Durham Light Infantry from 1942 to 1947.

John Earnshaw of Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottingham served in the King's Royal Rifle Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1970.

Bertie Findlay of Guildford, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Dorothy Gilbertson of Burnley, Lancashire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1945.

Boris Glassow of Newcastle upon Tyne served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946.

James Graham of Seaham, County Durham served in the Royal Military Police, the Royal Artillery, the Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's) and the Durham Light Infantry from 1951 to 1954.

Geoffrey Griffin of Crawley, West Sussex served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1944 to 1952.

Gilbert Haley of Polegate, East Sussex served in the Coldstream Guards and the Royal Artillery between 1949 and 1978.

Clive Hawkins of Colchester, Essex served in the General Service Corps, the Essex Regiment and the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) from 1944 to 1948.

Arthur Hunt of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire served in the Suffolk Regiment and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1946.

Merald Hutchins of Braintree, Essex served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1970 to 1977.

John Jones of Newtown, Powys served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Welch Fusiliers from 1944 to 1947.

Reginald Jones of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Mohan Kataria of Richmond, South West London served in the Indian Army from 1940 to 1945.

Christopher Keenie of Fakenham, Norfolk served in the Royal Hussars from 1969 to 1974.

Norman Kitching of Brighton served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1945 to 1948.

Frank Lawrence of Peacehaven, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Brian Marlow of Corby, Northants served in the Royal Marines from 1952 to 1954.

Michael O'Riordan of South West London served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1953 to 1959.

Doreen Orr of Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1944 to 1947.

James McIntyre of St Helens, Merseyside served in the Royal Artillery from 1954 to 1959.

David McLennan of Dunfermline, Fife served in the Royal Engineers from 1957 to 1964.

Bernard Parker of Plymouth served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

Laurence Peters of Basildon, Essex who served in the Royal Engineers, the Royal Artillery, and the King's Dragoon Guards from 1937 to 1946.

Mark Pile of Bath served in the Light Infantry (13TH, 32ND, 46TH, 51ST, 53RD, 68TH, 85TH, 105TH AND 106th Foot) from 1984 to 1993.

William Roberts of Conwy, Gwynedd who served in the Royal Navy from 1950 to 1960.

Frank Russell of Barking, Essex who served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1941 to 1947.

Rupert Smith of Cheadle, Cheshire served in the Royal Signals from 1939 to 1946.

Robert Scott of Gateshead, Tyne and Wear who served in the General Service Corps and the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry from 1947 to 1949.

Patrick South of Horsham, West Sussex served in the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1936 to 1946.

Kenneth Statham of Ripley, Derbyshire who served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1955.

Arthur Sullivan from Wallasey, Merseyside served in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Matthew Sweeney of Redcar, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946.

Albert Tanner of Weston Super Mare, Avon who served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Derek Thomas of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Merchant Navy from 1963 to 1967.

Enid Tring of Alresford, Hampshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1944 to 1946.

Marjorie Wakeford of Sutton Coldfield served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

Frank Walker of Deeside, Clwyd who served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1948.

Jack Waring of Grantham, Lincolnshire who served in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1956.

William Webb of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

David Williams of Marlborough, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1965 to 1971.

Brinley Wills of Wirral, Merseyside who served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1940 to 1946.

David Woodrough of Swindon, Wiltshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1954 to 1959.

Edgar Woods of Rye, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

In Memory

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following member and we offer our heartfelt condolences to their widows, widowers, family and friends.

Norman Adams, Royal Navy

Norman Adams of Blackpool, Lancashire died on 4th February 2012, aged 86. He served in the Royal Navy on a wide variety of ships from 1941 to 1956 as an Electrician Petty Officer. His Navy career was always seagoing and he served on HMS Renown, Raider, Victorious, Vigo, Chieftain, Defiance, Vigilany, Lochivar and Eskimo. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Kenneth Aiken-Jones, Royal Air Force

Kenneth Aiken-Jones of Doncaster, South Yorkshire died on 26th January 2012, aged 86. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1945. A cornet and trumpet player he joined the Fighter Command Band, which later became the Number One Regional Band. He served in the Middle East in Egypt, Amman and in the Far East, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaya. He provided music for foreign armies, dignitaries and potentates from various countries, before leaving the RAF as a Sergeant in 1952. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Eric Andrew, Royal Army Pay Corps

Eric Andrew of Wymondham, Norfolk died on 25th January 2012, aged 91. He joined the Royal Army Pay Corps in 1940 and served in Palestine, Cyprus, Egypt and Tripoli. After the war he served in Germany and Singapore. He left the Army in 1974 as a Warrant Officer 1st Class. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Geoffrey Baker, Royal Welch Fusiliers

Geoffrey Baker of Braintree, Essex died on 26th January 2012, aged 85. He joined the Army at the age of 17 and was deployed to France where he was transferred to the Royal Welch Fusiliers in Germany. He remained with them until the end of the war. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Leonard Barber, Suffolk Regiment

Leonard Barber of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 1st February 2012, aged 97. He served in the Suffolk Regiment from 1940 to 1946, serving in the Far East. He was demobilised as a Corporal. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Philip Belton, Royal Navy

Philip Belton of Newhaven, East Sussex died on 18th December 2011, aged 85. He joined the Royal Navy in 1944 and trained as a radar operator. He served in the aircraft carrier HMS Indomitable, the frigate HMS Fleetwood and the battleship HMS Howe. He was discharged in 1948. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Rex Boreham, Royal Artillery

Rex Boreham of Hailsham, East Sussex died on 24th December 2011, aged 97. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1940. He fought in North Africa and later returned to the UK. Captured in 1944 behind enemy lines in France with the SAS, Mr Boreham was taken prisoner and after a spell in a French prison he was transferred to a salt mine in Eastern Germany. He and some colleagues commandeered a car and got to Brussels for repatriation. He was discharged in January 1946 and rejoined the Royal Artillery in November that year. He was posted to Palestine and later became a Staff Instructor in Brighton where he was discharged for the second time. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Joseph Carnevale, Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps and the Army Catering Corps

Joseph Carnevale of Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 13th January 2012, aged 93. He joined the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps in June 1940 and transferred as a Corporal to the Royal Army Catering Corps in 1942. He was posted to North Africa, served in Egypt in the Nile Delta and the Canal Zone and was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Albert Cockerill, Royal Artillery and the Royal Army Service Corps

Albert Cockerill of High Barnes, Sunderland died on 27th January 2012, aged 90. He joined the TA in 1939 and was mobilised from Annual Camp at Whitby in 1939 into the Royal Artillery. In 1940 he transferred to the RASC. He was stationed in the UK until D-Day when he then supported the effort through Europe, moving through France, Belgium and Holland, ending up in Berlin. He was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Albert Coffen, Royal Air Force

Albert Coffen of Seaford, East Sussex died on 14th January 2012, aged 95. He served in the RAF from 1940 to 1946, serving in Egypt, Libya, Jordan, Tunisia and Syria. He was discharged as a Corporal. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Brian Costin, Royal Air Force

Brian Costin of Bognor Regis, West Sussex died on 13th January 2012, aged 87. He joined the RAF in 1943. He served at a variety of RAF stations, specialising on Stirling, Halifax and Lancaster aircraft. He was posted to Italy and dealt with Mustangs and Spitfires before discharge as an LAC in 1947. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Dennis Cox, Royal Engineers

Dennis Cox of Peterborough, Cambs died on 5th January 2012, aged 92. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1938 to 1946, when he went to France with the BEF. He then did tank recovery work in Chatham, fought in North Africa, and took part in the Italian Campaign. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Morris Evans, General Service Corps

Morris Evans of Hove, East Sussex died on 16th January 2012, aged 88. He served in the General Service Corps in 1943 at a number of locations across the UK. Fluent in French and German he also served with SOE. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Henry 'Eddie' Fox, Royal Air Force

Henry 'Eddie' Fox of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 22nd December 2011, aged 87. He joined the RAF in 1945 carrying out his training in Northampton, followed by the RAF School of PT at RAF Cosford. He served until 1968. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Kenneth German, Royal Artillery, the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Corps

Kenneth German of Lytham, Lancashire died on 28th December 2011, aged 90. Already in the TA in 1939 he was mobilised immediately at the commencement of hostilities and joined the Royal Artillery. He moved to the RAOC as a Wireless Specialist and became one of the first Tradesmen with the fledgling REME in 1942.

He was involved in the invasion of North Africa, Sicily and Normandy and moved through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. He was discharged in 1946 leaving as a Sergeant. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Ellis Gold, Royal Air Force

Ellis Gold of Liverpool died on 1st November 2011, aged 84. He joined the RAF in 1952 and spent most of his time at RAF Padgate as an RAF doctor. He was discharged in 1954. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Douglas Gray, Royal Artillery, Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Douglas Gray of Watford, Hertfordshire died on 2nd February 2012, aged 93. He joined the Volunteer Militia and subsequently the Royal Artillery in 1939. He transferred first to the RAOC in July 1942 and then to the REME in October 1942 as a specialist on radar. He was stationed in Earls Court detecting German aircraft and flying bombs. He was discharged as a Staff Sergeant in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Kenneth Golding, Royal Air Force

Kenneth Golding of Northwich, Cheshire died on 28th January 2012, aged 86. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1944 until 1947, leaving as a LAC. He had a variety of postings in the UK before being posted to India. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Charles Grealy, Royal Army Service Corps

Charles Grealy of Grange over Sands, Cumbria died on 27th July 2011, aged 91. He served from 1939 until 1946, leaving as a Lance Corporal. He was member of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and served in France and Belgium. He was later deployed to North Africa as part of the 1st Armoured Division and was also involved in the Italian Campaign. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Joseph Hardy, Durham Light Infantry

Joseph Hardy of Sunderland, Tyne and Wear died on 12th December 2011, aged 93. From 1940 to 1946 he served in the 1st Battalion Durham Light Infantry and 11th/3rd Battalion Parachute Regiments in Palestine. He later took part in Operation Market Garden, the day two parachute drop into Arnhem. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

David Hemming, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

David Hemming of Bordon, Hampshire died on 4th January 2012, aged 81. He joined the REME in 1953, serving in the UK and Trieste, Italy. He was discharged as a Craftsman in 1955. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Clair Hoare, Auxiliary Territorial Service

Clair Hoare of Minehead, Somerset died on 13th December 2011, aged 90. She served in the ATS from 1942 to 1954, at locations in North Wales and North Yorkshire attached to the Royal Corps of Signals. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Jason Hobday, Royal Air Force

Jason Hobday of Bedford, Bedfordshire died on 2nd February 2012, aged 42. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1987 to 1997, leaving as an S.A.C. He served as an Air Traffic Controller in the Gulf, Canada, USA, Cyprus and North West Europe. He played rugby for the RAF and was in the swimming and water polo teams. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Stanley Hook, Royal Navy

Stanley Hook of Brighton, East Sussex died on 2nd February 2012, aged 89. At the beginning of the war he joined the fire service as a despatch rider. He then served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946, leaving as a Petty Officer. He volunteered for combined operations and was involved with the Invasion of Sicily and in the D-Day landings, landing on Juno Beach. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Barbara Jackson, Auxiliary Territorial Service

Barbara Jackson of Bracknell, Berkshire died on 11th January 2012, aged 90. She joined the ATS in 1939, training as a cook and working in Officers' messes in Scotland and Leicester before she was discharged in 1945. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Alexander Jamieson, Royal Air Force

Alexander Jamieson of Elgin, Morayshire died on 18th May 2011, aged 87. He joined the RAF in 1941. After training he was a General Duties LAC until 1943, when he trained at RAF Hatton as a Lancaster Bomber Flight Mechanic. He served in the UK until VE Day, when he was posted to India and arrived there just before VJ Day. He was involved with the repatriation of PoWs in Europe. He was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Stanley Kirk, Royal Artillery

Stanley Kirk of Basingstoke, Hampshire died on 20th January 2012, aged 98. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946 in the UK, Palestine and Yugoslavia, prior to discharge as a Sergeant in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Daniel Laplain, Royal Air Force

Daniel Laplain of Downham Market, Norfolk died on 12th December 2011, aged 93. He served in the RAF from 1939 to 1946, leaving as a Corporal. He served in a variety of locations in the UK and in the Transvaal in South Africa, with the pilots training scheme where he was an engine fitter. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Ivanhoe 'Nigel' Lathom-Sharp, Royal Army Pay Corps, the Royal Artillery and the Royal Air Force

Ivanhoe 'Nigel' Lathom-Sharp of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 2nd January 2012, aged 92. He joined the Royal Army Pay Corps in 1939, transferring to the Royal Artillery, before finally transferring to the RAF. Having served in the UK, Canada, USA and India, he was discharged in 1946 as a Flight Lieutenant. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Mr Henry 'Sonny' Leigh, Royal Navy

Henry 'Sonny' Leigh of South East London died on 25th November 2011, aged 97. He served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1945 and on D-Day he was at Portland, involved in sweeping the route for the invasion. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Evelyn Lucas, Auxiliary Territorial Service

Evelyn Lucas of West London died on 4th January 2012, aged 91. She served in the ATS from 1942 to 1946, discharged as a Corporal. After her time in the services she spent several years in Canada. On her return to the UK she eventually joined the BBC as a secretary and was promoted to a production assistant in TV Comedy, which was very unusual for a woman at that time. She worked with Bill Cotton, David Croft and Jimmy Perry on Dad's Army and Are You Being Served. She then moved to the post of researcher in the Variety Department where she spent many years working on Parkinson and The Generation Game. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Geoffrey Martin, Royal Artillery

Geoffrey Martin of Brighton, East Sussex died on 28th December 2011, aged 96. He was Commissioned in the Royal Artillery in 1940. After training, he was posted to the Far East and served in India and Burma with Light Anti-Aircraft units. He was demobilised as a Lieutenant in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Michael Mann, Royal Armoured Corps King's Dragoon Guards

The Rt. Rev. Michael Mann of Oxford died on 31st December 2011, aged 87. He was commissioned into the Royal Armoured Corps King's Dragoon Guards in 1942, and served in the Middle East in 1943, and Italy and Greece at the end of the war. After the war he was in Syria and Palestine. Discharged in 1946 as a Major, he transferred to the Colonial Service. He was later ordained after a time spent at the Wells Theological College and worked in various parishes and dioceses. He was the Dean of Windsor in the late 1970's. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Reginald Nash, Royal Navy

Reginald Nash of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 25th January 2012, aged 89. He served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1945. He was posted to Iceland and then joined the 11th Destroyer Flotilla based at Harwich. He later volunteered for Submarine duty where he made use of his ASDIC (Sonar) operator's knowledge. His final posting was to the Mediterranean. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Joan Naylor, Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Joan Naylor of Basingstoke, Hampshire died on 25th January 2012, aged 88. She joined the WAAF in 1942. Trained at RAF Cramwell she served as a teleprinter operator at Chicksands and was billeted in Stony Stratford whilst working at Bletchley Park. She was discharged in 1945. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Anthony 'Tony' Newland, Royal Armoured Corps

Anthony 'Tony' Newland of Hove, East Sussex died on 5th January 2012, aged 78. From 1950 to 1956 he served as a Trooper with the Royal Armoured Corps in Libya, Korea, Japan and Germany. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Donald Orr, Dorset Regiment

Donald Orr of Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex died on 21st December 2011, aged 92. He joined the Dorset Regiment in 1939, trained as a Bandsman and stretcher bearer and served in the UK until 1944 when he landed in Normandy on D+10. Mr Orr fought through to Germany, was at Arnhem Bridge and was eventually discharged as a Private in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Nigel Patterson, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Nigel Patterson of Blackpool, Lancashire died on 20th January 2012, aged 79. He joined the REME in 1952 and served in Germany. He was discharged from National Service in 1954, but served as a member of the TA until 1957. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

John 'Jack' Ray, Royal Signals

John 'Jack' Ray of Caterham, Surrey died on 15th November 2011, aged 91. He enlisted into the Royal Signals (TA) in 1939. Fully mobilised when the war started, he was posted to the Middle East in 1940 where he fought in the North Africa campaign in Egypt, Libya and Palestine. He was also in Sierra Leone. He was later deployed to Italy and was finally discharged as a Corporal in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Percy Richardson, Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy

Percy Richardson of Ferndown, Dorset died on 11th December 2011, aged 80. He joined the Royal Navy in 1947, transferring three months later to the Merchant Navy. He sailed around the world becoming a Quartermaster, Bosun and Master Arms. He completed his sea service in 1972. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Arthur Robinson, General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery

Arthur Robinson of Liverpool Merseyside died on 23rd January 2012, aged 83. He was enlisted to the General Service Corps in 1946, but transferred to the Royal Artillery three months later. He trained at Woolwich and was soon sent to Germany where he remained for five years. He served until 1952. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Edwin Robinson, Royal Pioneer Corps

Edwin Robinson of Bicester, Oxfordshire died on 1st December 2011, aged 95. He served in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1940 to 1946. Due to poor eyesight

he served only in the UK, when he was in charge of recruit training in Yorkshire. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Eric Soanes, General Service Corps, Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's), Durham Light Infantry, Royal Engineers

Eric Soanes of King's Lynn, Norfolk died on 13th December 2011, aged 87. He joined the General Service Corps in 1943, before transferring to the Royal Berkshire Regiment, and in 1944 to the Durham Light Infantry. In 1946, he transferred again, to the Royal Engineers and did an engineering apprenticeship before he was discharged as a Private in 1947. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

John Spence, Royal Ulster Rifles

John Spence of Ballycastle, Co. Antrim died on 31st January 2012, aged 84. He served as a Rifleman in the Royal Ulster Rifles from 1946 until 1954. He was captured while fighting in Korea and made a PoW. He was shot in the left leg and suffered injury to his right leg. He was released in August 1953, but he had developed Beri-Beri in captivity as a result of severe malnutrition. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Douglas Tanner, Royal Artillery

Douglas Tanner of Crawley, West Sussex died on 20th January 2012, aged 92. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946 and manned Ack-Ack guns. He landed in Normandy 12 days after D-Day and fought through Belgium and Holland to Germany. He was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

William Wardlaw, Royal Navy

William Wardlaw of Edinburgh died on 8th January 2012, aged 88. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941. He specialised as an Electric Torpedo Artificer, working with midget submarines. He served in the Mediterranean where he specialised in the coding system and spent some time in Malta, the North Atlantic and UK waters. He decided to remain in the Royal Navy at the end of the war and during his service was stationed all around the world – notably, China, Japan, Philippines, Hong Kong and Singapore. His specialisations included Atomic Warfare Instructor to an Electrical Artificer before he left the Royal Navy in 1972 as a Chief Petty Officer. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Albert Wesson, Royal Air Force

Albert Wesson of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died on 5th January 2012, aged 92. He joined the RAF in 1939 specialising as a Wireless Operator. He was posted to No 23 Squadron, a night fighter unit operating Blenheim's in Lincolnshire. After the Battle of Britain, he was posted to the Middle East and subsequently Egypt. He was then attached to No 1 Squadron South African Air Force and spent time in Libya, Sicily and Italy. He was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Kenneth Whittingham, Royal Navy

Kenneth Whittingham of Gillingham, Kent died on 2nd January 2012, aged 87. He served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1944 to 1946 and trained at HMS Gosling as an Air Mechanic. He served at various Naval Air Stations and serviced Mosquito aircraft. He was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

William Whitehouse, Non Combatant Corps

William Whitehouse of Stourbridge, West Midlands died on 1st January 2012, aged 94. When the war was declared he held strong humanitarian views, and as a result joined the Non Combatant Corps, serving with the Royal Pioneer Corps in a variety of administrative tasks. He was also posted to a PoW camp in Essex. He spent some time with the Polish section of the Pioneer Corps. He left as Private Admin Clerk. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Richard Williams, General Service Corps, Royal Army Service Corps

Richard Williams of Winslow, Buckinghamshire died on 3rd January 2012, aged 96. He joined the General Service Corps and was transferred to the RASC in 1944. He served in Sicily, Italy, Egypt, Greece (Salonika), and the UK before he was discharged as a Sergeant in 1947. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Stanley Wright, Royal Navy

Stanley Wright of Beccles, Suffolk died on 22nd January 2012, aged 87. He served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1942 to 1946. He trained at HMS Gosling, followed by specialist radar training. He was attached to the RAF 819 Squadron on Arctic E boat duty and was later deployed to Belgium. He then went to Ceylon and arrived in time for VJ Day before discharge as a Petty Officer Radio Mechanic. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.